

Application No. 10/685,747

Attorney Docket No. AOL0143

Status of the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A process implemented across a network, comprising the steps of:

receiving at an application module a search query from a user at a user terminal, the search query comprising at least one search parameter specified by the user;

receiving at the application module means for refining at least one search initiated by a the user at a the terminal comprising identification of at least one source specified by the user, the at least one source external to the application module and accessible to the application module across the network;

~~receiving a search query from the user, the search query comprising at least one search parameter specified by the user;~~

receiving information at the application module across the network from at least one of the external sources, wherein the information is independently maintained by the at least one external source;

providing a refined search through the application module, wherein the refinement comprises any of

using the received information from at least one of the user-specified external sources in conjunction with the search parameters received from the user to perform the search,

performing the search with the search parameters received from the user and subsequently refining search results with the received information from at least one of the user-specified external sources, and

performing the search with the search parameters received from the user and subsequently providing any of organizing and sorting of the search results with the received information from at least one of the user-specified external sources; and

returning the results of the refined search from the application module to any of the user at the user terminal and a recipient at a recipient terminal, the recipient other than the user.

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2. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 1, wherein the terminal comprises any of a personal computer, a laptop computer, a personal digital assistant, a network enabled portable phone, a mobile device, a wired device and a wireless device.

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3. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 1, wherein at least one of the user-specified external sources comprises any of a person and an entity associated with the user.

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4. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 1, wherein the results of the refined search are returned to the recipient other than the user, and wherein the recipient is selected by the user.

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5. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 1, wherein the results of the refined search are returned to the recipient other than the user, and wherein the recipient is determined based on the enhanced results of the refined search.

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6. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 1, wherein the results of the refined search are returned to the recipient other than the user, and wherein the recipient is determined based on information input by the user.

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7. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 1, wherein the results of the refined search are returned to the recipient other than the user, and wherein the process further comprising comprises the steps of:
receiving information from a the recipient; and
selectively sending the enhanced results of the refined search to the recipient based upon any of the received information received from the recipient and a selection of the recipient by the user.

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8. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 7, wherein the received information received from the recipient comprises an interest in the enhanced results.

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9. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
querying the selected user-specified external source in response to the
specification by the user; and

5 receiving the information from the selected user-specified external source
in response to the query.

10. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 1, wherein the results of the
refined search are returned to the recipient other than the user, and wherein the
recipient is any of a selected peer, a friend, a family relative, a student, a
10 neighbor, any of a person or entity within a zip code region, and a member of a
network of people associated with the user.

11. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 10, wherein the network of
people comprises any of people with similar interests and a chain of friends.

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12. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 1, wherein the selected user-
specified external source comprises a ratings service.

13. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 1, wherein the identified
20 external source specified by the user comprises one of the received search
parameters.

14. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 1, wherein the received
search parameters have an applicability to one or more subjects, the process
25 further comprising the steps of:

determining a subject matter of the received search query; and
integrating any of the received search parameters with the search query,
wherein the integrated received search parameters are applicable to the
determined subject matter.

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15. (Original) The process of Claim 14, wherein the subject matter is explicitly
determined from user input.

16. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 14, wherein the subject matter
35 is determined from the received search parameters.

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17. (Currently Amended) A process implemented across a network, comprising the steps of:

receiving at an application module a search query from a user at a terminal, the search query comprising at least one search parameter specified by the user;

soliciting from a the user at a the terminal means for refining at least one search initiated by the user, the refining means comprising any of an identification and a selection by the user of at least one information source external to the application module and accessible to the application module across the network;

receiving a search query from the user, the search query comprising at least one search parameter specified by the user;

receiving information at the application module across the network from at least one of the external sources, wherein the information is independently maintained by the at least one external source;

providing a refined search through the application module, wherein the refinement comprises any of

using the received information from at least one of the solicited external information sources in conjunction with the search parameters received from the user to perform the search,

performing the search with the search parameters received from the user and subsequently refining search results with the received information from at least one of the solicited external information sources, and

performing the search with the search parameters received from the user and subsequently providing any of organizing and sorting of the search results with the received information from at least one of the solicited external information sources; and

returning the results of the refined search from the application module to any of the user at the user terminal and a recipient at a recipient terminal, the recipient other than the user.

18. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 17, wherein the terminal comprises any of a personal computer, a laptop computer, a personal digital assistant, a network enabled portable phone, a mobile device, a wired device and a wireless device.

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19. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 17, wherein at least one of the solicited external information sources comprises any of a person and an entity associated with the user.

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20. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 17, wherein the results of the refined search are returned to the recipient other than the user, and wherein the recipient is selected by the user.

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21. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 17, wherein the results of the refined search are returned to the recipient other than the user, and wherein the recipient is determined based on the results of the refined search.

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22. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 17, wherein the results of the refined search are returned to the recipient other than the user, and wherein the recipient is determined based on information input by the user.

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23. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 17, wherein the results of the refined search are returned to the recipient other than the user, and wherein the process further comprising comprises the steps of:

receiving information from a the recipient; and

selectively sending the results of the refined search to the recipient based upon any of the ~~received~~ information received from the recipient and a selection of the recipient by the user.

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24. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 23, wherein the ~~received~~ information received from the recipient comprises an interest in the results.

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25. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 17, wherein the ~~selected~~ solicited external information source comprises a ratings service.

26. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 17, wherein the solicited external information source comprises one of the received search parameters.

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27. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 17, wherein the received search parameters have an applicability to one or more subjects, the process further comprising the steps of:

- 5 determining a subject matter of the received search query; and
 integrating any of the received specified search parameters with the search query, wherein the integrated received search parameters are applicable to the determined subject matter.

- 10 28. (Original) The process of Claim 27, wherein the subject matter is explicitly determined from user input.

29. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 27, wherein the subject matter is determined from the received search parameters.

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30. (Currently Amended) A search enhancement system implemented across a network, comprising:

a search engine;

an application module;

5 at least one source external to the application module and accessible to the application module across the network, the external source comprising of any a secondary source and a supplementary source comprising information;

means associated with the application module for receiving from a user at a user terminal means for refining at least one search initiated by the user, the
10 refining means comprising a specification by the user of at least one of the secondary or supplementary external sources;

means associated with the application module for receiving a search query entered by the user at the user terminal, the search query comprising at least one search parameter specified by the user; and

15 means associated with the application module for receiving information from at least one of the external sources over the network, wherein the information is independently maintained by the at least one external source;

means associated with the application module for providing a refined search, wherein the refinement comprises any of

20 using the received information from at least one of the user-specified external sources in conjunction with the search parameters received from the user to perform the search at the search engine;

performing the search at the search engine with the search parameters received from the user and subsequently refining search
25 results with the received information from at least one of the user-specified external sources, and

performing the search at the search engine with the search parameters received from the user and subsequently providing any of organizing and sorting of the search results with the received information
30 from at least one of the user-specified external sources; and

means for returning the results of the refined search from the application module to any of the user at the user terminal and a recipient at a recipient terminal, the recipient other than the user.

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31. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 30, wherein the terminal comprises any of a personal computer, a laptop computer, a personal digital assistant, a network enabled portable phone, a mobile device, a wired device and a wireless device.

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32. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 30, wherein at least one of the user-specified external sources comprises any of a person and an entity associated with the user.

10 33. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 30, wherein the results of the refined search are returned to the recipient other than the user, and wherein the recipient is selectable by the user.

15 34. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 30, wherein the results of the refined search are returned to the recipient other than the user, and wherein the recipient is based on the enhanced results of the refined search.

20 35. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 30, wherein the results of the refined search are returned to the recipient other than the user, and wherein the recipient is based on information input by the user.

25 36. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 30, further comprising:
information received at the application module from a recipient other than the user; and
a selective transmission of the enhanced results to the recipient based upon any of the received information received from the recipient and a selection of the recipient by the user; and
a receipt of the results of the refined search by the recipient other than the user.

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37. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 36, wherein the received information received from the recipient comprises an interest in the enhanced results.

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38. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 30, further comprising:

means to query the selected user-specified external sources in response to the specification by the user; and

5 means to receive information from the selected user-specified external sources in response to the query.

39. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 30, further comprising:

a receipt of the results of the refined search by the recipient other than the user;

10 wherein the recipient is any of a selected peer, a friend, a family relative, a student, a neighbor, any of a person or entity within a zip code region, and a member of a network of people associated with the user.

40. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 39, wherein the network of
15 people comprises any of people with similar interests and a chain of friends.

41. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 30, wherein the ~~selected~~ user-specified external source comprises a ratings service.

20 42. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 30, wherein the identified external source specified by the user comprises one of the received search parameters.

25 43. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 30, wherein the received search parameters have an applicability to one or more subjects, the system further comprising:

30 means for determining a subject matter of the received search query; and
means for integrating any of the received search parameters with the received search query, wherein the integrated received search parameters are applicable to the determined subject matter.

44. (Original) The system of Claim 43, wherein the determined subject matter is based upon user input.

35 45. (Original) The system of Claim 43, wherein the determined subject matter is based upon the received search query.

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46. (Currently Amended) A system implemented across a network, comprising:
an application module;

- 5 a search query initiated by a user through a user terminal connected to
the network, the search query comprising at least one search parameter
specified by the user and received by a search system;

- means associated with the application module for receiving from a the
user through a the user terminal located on the network means for refining at
least one search initiated by the user; the refining means comprising a
10 specification of at least one source external to the application module and
accessible to the application module across the network, the external source
comprising of any of a secondary source and a supplementary source;

- ~~a search query initiated by the user through the user terminal located on~~
~~the network, the search query comprising at least one search parameter~~
15 ~~specified by the user;~~

means associated with the application module for receiving information
from at least one of the external sources over the network, wherein the
information is independently maintained by the at least one external source;

- means associated with the application module for providing a refined
20 search, wherein the refinement comprises any of

using the received information from at least one of the user-
specified external sources in conjunction with the search parameters
received from the user to perform the search; search,

- performing the search with the search parameters received from
25 the user and subsequently refining search results with the received
information from at least one of the user-specified external sources, and

- performing the search with the search parameters received from
the user and subsequently providing any of organizing and sorting of the
search results with the received information from at least one of the user-
30 specified external sources; and

means for returning the results of the refined search from the application
module to any of the user at the user terminal and a recipient at a recipient
terminal, the recipient other than the user.

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47. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 46, wherein the user terminal comprises any of a personal computer, a laptop computer, a personal digital assistant, a network enabled portable phone, a mobile device, a wired device and a wireless device.

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48. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 46, wherein at least one of the user-specified external sources comprises any of a person and an entity associated with the user.

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49. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 46, further comprising:
a receipt of the results of the refined search by the recipient other than the
user;

wherein the recipient is selectable through the user terminal.

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50. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 46, further comprising:
a receipt of the results of the refined search by the recipient other than the
user;

wherein the recipient is determined based on the enhanced results of the
refined search.

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51. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 46, further comprising:
a receipt of the results of the refined search by the recipient other than the
user;

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wherein the recipient is determined based on information input at the user
terminal.

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52. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 46, further comprising:
information received from a recipient at a recipient terminal; and
a selective transmission of the enhanced results of the refined search to
the recipient based upon any of the received information received from the
recipient and a selection of the recipient through the user terminal; and
a receipt of the results of the refined search by the recipient other than the
user.

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53. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 52, wherein the received information received from the recipient comprises an interest in the enhanced results of the refined search by the recipient.

- 5 54. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 46, further comprising:
means to query the selected user-specified external sources in response to the specification by the user; and
means to receive information from the selected user-specified external sources in response to the query.

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55. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 46, further comprising:
a receipt of the results of the refined search by the recipient other than the user;

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wherein the recipient is any of a selected peer, a friend, a family relative, a student, a neighbor, any of a person or entity within a zip code region, and a member of a network of people associated with the user.

56. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 55, wherein the network of people comprises any of people with similar interests and a chain of friends.

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57. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 46, wherein the selected user-specified external source comprises a ratings service.

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58. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 46, wherein the identified external source specified by the user comprises one of the received search parameters.

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59. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 46, wherein the received search parameters have an applicability to one or more subjects, the system further comprising:
means for integrating any of the specified received search parameters with a search query, wherein the integrated received search parameters are applicable to a determined subject of the received search query.

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60. (Original) The system of Claim 59, wherein the determined subject matter is based upon user input.

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61. (Original) The system of Claim 59, wherein the determined subject matter is based upon the received search query.